



Appleby Archaeology Newsletter



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Group News

I'm very pleased to be able to report that our "migration" to Centre 67 seems to have met with general approval. The committee is aware of one or two minor issues and is working to address these, but we feel overall that the change has been well worthwhile. If you have any comments or suggestions we hope you will let a member of the Committee know.

At the last Committee meeting we discussed plans for resuming Apparch's practical archaeological work. As you will know, hopes of continuing our work on Bracken Moor stalled last summer due to funding problems. We still aim to find funds to complete the post-excavation work arising from the 2012 excavation of the funerary site but now have no plans to resume excavation or surveying activities on the Moor. Instead we are considering a more general focus on the early history and development of Appleby town itself. More details of this will be given at the AGM in January.

Details of members' talks to be delivered at the AGM are announced on the back page of this newsletter and I enclose an Agenda together with the Minutes of last year's meeting. You'll be pleased to hear that there are no plans to increase our membership charges so I also enclose a renewal form in the hope that we'll be seeing you again next year. Please note that the AGM will start at 7.30 this year rather than the traditional 7.00pm

Finally, may I wish all our readers a very Merry Christmas and Best Wishes for 2015.

Martin Joyce

Good things come in Twos- Kirkhaugh 2014

You may remember a report we ran in last Autumn's newsletter about Andrew Fitzpatrick's plans for the excavation of a prehistoric burial mound at Kirkhaugh near Alston this summer. Archaeologists had already had a go at this back in 1935 and, among other finds, had turned up

a rather nice gold hair ornament dating to around 2300BC.

It was so nice that we printed a picture and commented on the fact that these are usually found in pairs. Would you believe that in the course of this summer's excavation (conducted under the auspices of Altogether Archaeology), the missing partner to the 1935 grip turned up? Better still, the find was made by schoolboys from Alston, and remarkably, two of them were the great-great-grandsons of a member of the 1935 team – well done lads.

I'm now extremely pleased to be able to round off the earlier report with a picture of the latest find.



*The missing 4300 year-old hair-ornament.
Photo courtesy Altogether Archaeology*

Martin Joyce

Hartlepool Day Trip

In September this year, 15 members of our group ventured across the Pennines to visit Hartlepool and explore the rich history of this northeast coastal town.

First stop was a visit to the Hartlepool Marina and the Maritime Experience. Hartlepool was the destination for the Tall Ships Race in 2009 and it received a considerable amount of investment as a result. The Historic Quay was re-created as an 18th century seaport, and while the re-

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construction may not be to everyone's taste, you could not fail to appreciate how life must have been for sea-farers of the time. The 'experience' included various well-stocked shops, an 18th century house, armoury, and tavern, and a re-construction of a battle at sea. Most impressive was the HMS Trincomalee, the oldest British warship still afloat. Built in Bombay, India, in 1817, the Trincomalee was brought to Hartlepool in 1987, where it has taken over 10 years to restore the ship to her former glory. She does not fail to impress! Before lunch we had time to visit the adjacent Hartlepool Museum, which houses some of the archaeological finds from the historic headland, our afternoon destination.



Apparch members meet the Trincomalee

The Headland, as it is known today, was the original settlement of Hartlepool; West Hartlepool being a 19th century creation following the arrival of the railway. We started our tour at St Hilda's Church Visitors Centre. This fine Early English church on the Headland is believed to be on the site of the c. 7th century St Hilda's monastery and stands close to the sea on the Headland. From it there are views of the marina and over Tees Bay into North Yorkshire (on a clear day). It has enormous buttresses, and an astonishingly long nave. We were met there by Robin Daniels of Tees Archaeology who provided an excellent introduction to the history and archaeology of the site. Thereafter we walked a short distance to the medieval town walls, where he expertly explained the development of the town and harbour, and the historical significance of Hartlepool as a coastal town and supply base for Durham city. Robin painted a vivid picture of a bustling port and town, which in its heyday was not unlike Whitby, but was of greater importance to the surrounding area.

We then walked along the promenade, past numerous cormorants and a statue of the cartoon character Andy Capp, pausing at the location of an early Time Team excavation. This is the site of an early Anglo-Saxon monastery. Graves and houses were discovered here, but nothing is visible now as the site has disappeared beneath a terrace of 19th century houses. Indeed an Anglo-Saxon name

stone from the site is on display in St Hilda's Church. The mystery, which Robin still cannot explain, is "why are all the graves aligned north-south, and not east-west as is usual for Christian burials?"

Moving on, Robin told us of the WW1 bombardment of Hartlepool. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Heugh Battery bombardment, the only coastal battery in England to fire its guns in anger during the First World War. On Wednesday, 16 December 1914, just after 08:10 hours that morning, the guns on three German battle cruisers opened fire and shells rained down on the streets of Hartlepool. Though the town's Heugh Battery returned fire, the bombardment resulted in extensive damage and severe loss of life. Members were able to learn more about this aspect of the town's history at The Heugh Battery Museum, before boarding the bus back to Appleby.



Hartlepool, 1914 - an inappropriate early Christmas present from the Kaiser

It was a full day, with a lot of history to take in, but extremely enjoyable and well worth the trip. I certainly gained a new appreciation of the history and significance of a much-maligned town.

Martin Railton

Crosby Garrett Helmet Secrets Revealed

On Tuesday 11th November a packed meeting of Appleby Archaeological Society was fascinated to hear about the context in which the now famous Crosby Garrett Helmet was buried.

It was discovered on open farmland in Carvetii territory, a self governing province in a remote part of Roman Britain and over 10km from the Roman Fort at Brough and even further from the major military sites of Hadrian's Wall.

Most people in Cumbria know the story of how two metal

detectorists found the stunning bronze helmet in 2010, but the mystery of how and why it was hidden is something which may always remain a mystery.

Since its discovery, archeologists have been searching the area around the find spot for clues to help them understand the archaeological context of its burial. Appleby Archaeology Group was able to invite two of the participating archaeologists to speak to their November meeting. Both were contributors to the official reports and the Tullie House guide which accompanied the recent exhibition.

We first heard Patricia Shaw, an independent archaeologist working for Grampus Heritage and Training Ltd., who described the Geophysical and Landscape survey she and her colleagues had carried out. They had just four days in which to assess the archaeology of the find spot site and its immediate surroundings, often working in atrocious conditions, as they encountered some of the worst weather of a Cumbrian winter.

A 20m x 20m grid was laid over the designated area and a magnetometer survey was used to produce a map plotting its magnetic anomalies. Taken in conjunction with landscape surveys and field observations, this revealed evidence of linear boundaries, hut circles and enclosures. A large bank and ditch was clearly visible on the dramatic photographs which accompanied the talk. There were features from more than one historic period with definite evidence of Romano British settlement.

After Patricia's fascinating talk, Chris Healey of Minerva Heritage talked in detail about the archaeological excavations which followed. In the short time scale allocated it was decided to dig three 3m x 2m test pits. The purpose of Trench 1 was to investigate if the helmet had been buried where the detectorists said they'd found it. Trench 2 was to investigate possible hut circles and Trench 3 a possible rectangular feature. Both the hut circles and the

rectangular feature had shown up as anomalies on the geophysical survey.

Working once more in atrocious conditions, the archaeologists confirmed that the find spot (Trench 1) showed signs of recent digging and backfilling which indicated that the helmet had been found where reported. Fragments of copper alloy similar to that used in the helmet were also found and were sent to Liverpool University for analysis along with two Roman coins dated to the 330CE. Fragments of Roman pottery and some animal bones indicating a Romano British settlement were also present. Some stone slabs were also found together with evidence of a

possible cairn. Due to the backfilling, however, it was impossible to say from which layer the Helmet had been recovered.

Approximately 50 flints from an earlier era were found in Trench 2 in association with the remains of two hut circles.

Trench 3 revealed the edge of a wall, some post holes and evidence of a drainage gully, but apart from fragments of a mortarium (a type

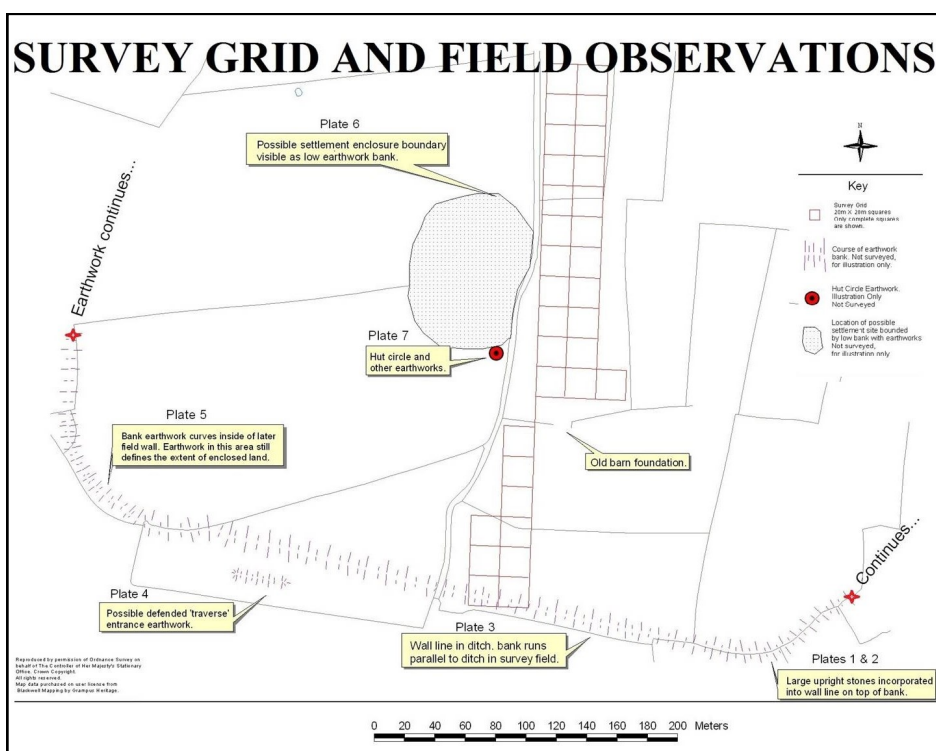
of Roman pottery vessel), the excavation produced no firm dating evidence.

Field walking was also carried out and objects dating between the Bronze Age and the Iron Age were found, together with some highly fragmented Roman pottery and the bones of cattle, sheep, goats and horses.

Overall the limited evidence suggested that there was a settlement here over many hundreds and possible thousands of years including the Romano British period.

Chris concluded the talk with slides of recent hoards at Snettisham, Ribchester and Frome illustrating the treasures still lying undiscovered in many parts of the British Isles.

Heather Edwards



Lake District National Park Conference November 2014

This year's Lake District National Park Conference featured some particularly interesting talks. As usual, it took place at the Theatre by the Lake in Keswick and was very well attended.

Since the National Park Authority's budget is now greatly reduced (they only get two thirds of the money they received five years ago), the emphasis is increasingly on "community" projects which employ volunteer labour to amplify the efforts of the diminished core of professional archaeologists. Things may get better if the Authority's bid to UNESCO to make the Lake District a World Heritage site is accepted – but they're still working on this and the outcome won't be known for a year or two.

Star of the show was Jamie Lund who described a community project at Sizergh that started in 2013 and that was completed earlier this year. It provided a perfect example of just how successful these projects can be. Jamie had excavated a burnt mound, investigated a mysterious banked track-way and documented a historic barn, all through the efforts of local volunteers. Uniquely, the projects had been blessed with perfect weather and idyllic surroundings. Clearly a great time had been had by all.

Burnt mounds, you may recall, are those enigmatic piles of burnt, cracked stones, found throughout the country, and which have been interpreted variously as cooking/feasting sites and saunas. Jamie's burnt mound proved to be a classic. Excavation revealed not only the timbers of the "hot tub" but also traces of the launder which had fed water into it from a nearby spring. Radio carbon dating suggested the site had been in use for around 600 years, starting at around 2500 BC. Significantly, as elsewhere in Cumbria, no animal remains were found, lending weight to the sauna theory as opposed to the cooking interpretation.

Jamie's mysterious banked track-way remained mysterious due to an almost total lack of dating evidence. And there was further disappointment when the barn, which it had been hoped might be confirmed as one of the oldest in the country, proved to have been rebuilt at some stage. Nevertheless, the project had clearly been a great success, both in terms of the new information which it had provided and, more importantly perhaps, the enthusiasm and skills which had been developed amongst members of the local community.

The conference is always excellent value, and this had been no exception. Make a diary note to go next year.

Martin Joyce

Winter Lectures

AGM and Members evening

Tuesday 13th Jan

Trish Shaw : An update on Holme Cultram Abbey

Dr Mike Lee : Musgrave Tithe Barn

Martin Railton : The Musgrave church field surveys

The Carlisle Ship Canal 1821 - 1853

Tuesday 10th Feb

Speaker : David Ramshaw

The Carlisle Ship Canal was intended to be the economic salvation of the city. It opened to fanfares in 1823 but by 1854 it had gone. David examines the story of the most northerly canal in England.

Tuesday 10th Mar

A last-minute problem has left us looking for a new speaker for our March lecture. Please check your email or access the website for details of the replacement lecture.

The Roman Navy and the Classis Britannica

Tuesday 14th Apr

Speaker : David Mason

All lectures will take place at 7.30pm in the upper room of Centre 67 in Chapel Street. Please try to be prompt as the street doors are locked once the meeting starts and access for late-comers (via the fire-escape round the side) is awkward.

